

# Queering women, peace and security

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In all regions, people experience violence and discrimination because of their sexual orientation and gender identity. In many cases, even the perception of homosexuality or transgender identity puts people at risk.<sup>1</sup>

After 15 years of advocacy and policy action related to the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) architecture,<sup>2</sup> the continued silence about homophobic and transphobic violence targeting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) individuals in conflict-related environments is alarming. Those vulnerable to insecurity and violence because of their sexual orientation or gender identity remain largely neglected by the international peace and security community. This neglect is in part the result of heteronormative assumptions in the framing of the WPS agenda. The goal of this article is not only to point out this silence but also to propose ways in which a queer security analysis can address and redress these silences in policy through paying attention to the damaging role heteronormativity and cisprivilege play in sustaining the current gap in analysis of gendered violence.<sup>3</sup> A queer theory analysis reveals a wide spectrum of identities that do not fit neatly into a binary conception of gender restricted to exclusive categories of male/female or man/woman. This article reviews the policy implications of excluding sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) against LGBTQ individuals from policy implementation and NGO monitoring of the WPS agenda.

Because LGBTQ individuals are under constant threat in many places, viewing the shifts in insecurity for this population in conflict-related environments through a gender lens offers a significant contribution to how policy-makers understand human security more broadly. Understanding what drives violence against individuals marginalized for their sexual orientation and gender identity will also shed light on the larger question of how SGBV operates in conflict-

<sup>1</sup> Human Rights Council, 'Discriminatory laws and practices and acts of violence against individuals based on their sexual orientation and gender identity', Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, A/HRC/19/41, 17 Nov. 2011, para. 1.

<sup>2</sup> For the history of WPS, see Paul Kirby and Laura J. Shepherd, 'Reintroducing women, peace and security', *International Affairs* 92: 2, March 2016, pp. 249–54 above.

<sup>3</sup> Cisprivilege is a term that refers to the privilege enjoyed by individuals who identify with the sex/gender they are assigned at birth. Heteronormativity is the world-view within which heterosexual relationships are the preferred or normal orientation.

related environments. International NGOs including Human Rights Watch and OutRight Action International<sup>4</sup> have already begun to look into homophobic and transphobic violence in some conflicts, for example in Iraq.

## Peace and security for LGBTQ individuals too

Violence against LGBTQ individuals takes a similar shape to the targeted violence against women the WPS architecture has long worked to address. Of the utmost importance to recognizing gendered vulnerabilities is understanding how an individual's multiple social identities compound the risk of violence against them. For example, the UN Human Rights Council report regarding violence against individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation and gender identity explains: 'Lesbians and transgender women are at a particular risk because of gender inequality and power relations within families and wider society.'<sup>5</sup> Carol Cohn notes that 'gender is, at its heart, a structural power relation'.<sup>6</sup> Gendered power relations drive homophobic and transphobic violence in similar ways to the now well-documented systemic use of rape as a weapon of war in some conflict-related environments.

Queer theory, a term coined in the early 1990s, draws from the fields of literary criticism and post-structuralist philosophy 'to emphasize deviance and unstable sexualities and question established norms, categories, and orders'.<sup>7</sup> Using a queer lens to understand global SGBV remains a fringe approach within international relations. Cynthia Weber describes how scholars outside the traditional International Relations discipline have been made into 'intellectual immigrants', explaining:

The poorest neighborhoods of IR have always been those populated by new intellectual immigrants to IR. These include Marxists, poststructuralists, feminists, critical race scholars, postcolonial scholars, critical studies scholars and queer scholars. These scholars are poor because they wield the least disciplinary capital in IR. This is because their analyses deviate from an exclusive focus on 'the states-system, the diplomatic community itself' and because they refuse Disciplinary IR's epistemological and methodological claims about knowledge collection and accumulation.<sup>8</sup>

Gender mainstreaming and the documentation of SGBV by the WPS architecture can be a force of oppression and erasure of LGBTQ experience. Exclusion of LGBTQ individuals from monitoring and reporting on WPS resolutions pertaining to SGBV is both theoretical in the way gender is framed and political in the resulting inclusion or exclusion of individuals as a result of this framing.

<sup>4</sup> OutRight Action International was formerly the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission.

<sup>5</sup> Human Rights Council, 'Discriminatory laws and practices and acts of violence against individuals based on their sexual orientation and gender identity', para 21.

<sup>6</sup> Carol Cohn, 'Women and wars: toward a conceptual framework', in Carol Cohn, ed., *Women and wars* (Cambridge: Polity, 2013), p. 4.

<sup>7</sup> Manuela Lavinias Picq and Markus Thiel, 'Introduction: sexualities in world politics', in Manuela Lavinias Picq and Markus Thiel, eds, *Sexualities in world politics: how LGBTQ claims shape international relations* (New York: Routledge, 2015), p. 8.

<sup>8</sup> Cynthia Weber, 'Why is there no queer international theory?', *European Journal of International Relations* 21: 1, 2015, p. 42; Martin Wight, 'Why is there no international theory?', in Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight, eds, *Diplomatic investigations* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1966), p. 17–34.

Sexual and gender-based violence is physical, mental or sexual harm or suffering, or threats of such, coercion and other deprivations of liberty, based on socially ascribed differences between men and women and can occur in both public and private life.<sup>9</sup> SGBV targeting LGBTQ individuals remains largely unaccounted for in conversations about gender and conflict as a result of a binary categorization of gender. In one promising exception, at the Security Council debate on 15 years of WPS, the NGO Working Group on WPS did make explicit reference to SGBV against LGBTQ individuals in Iraq.<sup>10</sup> This kind of focused attention on the lives and needs of LGBTQ individuals as a matter of peace and security is lacking, however, in all eight of the UN Security Council resolutions on WPS documents<sup>11</sup> and throughout the formal WPS architecture. Whether the WPS community intends to include the human rights of LGBTQ individuals in WPS-driven protective measures with a more expansive understanding of who experiences SGBV is unclear. Certainly some of the challenges faced are the same, as Budhiraja, Fried and Teixeira point out: ‘Those who challenge traditional norms of gender and sexuality—among them feminists, sex workers, lesbian/gay/bisexual and transgender people—are situated within such a common context of struggle.’<sup>12</sup>

It should be noted that the primary acronym used in this article, LGBTQ, encapsulates not only the categories most often used by international NGOs to describe sexual and gender minorities, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender, but includes the Q as well to refer to the radical impact of queer identities in terms of non-normative framing. As the editors of the collection *Sexualities in world politics* explain, adding ‘queer’ to LGBT is a way to ‘highlight the inherent linkage between inclusionary and transgressive approaches towards sexual equality for all’.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, the Q allows for the inclusion of those questioning their gender identity or sexual orientation as well as a broader community of allies invested in recognizing the rights of non-heteronormative individuals. Nevertheless, the LGBTQ acronym is a predominantly West-centric description and as such is limited in its capacity to represent sexual and gender minorities across the globe.

The particular security problems faced by LGBTQ individuals, exemplified by the violence targeted at gay men and transgender women, are not addressed by the dominant heteronormative gender assumptions within the WPS architecture. Some examples of this type of violence are described in a 2009 study by Human Rights Watch that found targeted violence against men in Iraq who were not

<sup>9</sup> UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), ‘Action against sexual and gender-based violence: an updated strategy’, June 2011, <http://www.unhcr.org/4e1d5ab9.pdf>, accessed 22 Jan. 2016, p. 6.

<sup>10</sup> UN News Centre, ‘Security Council renews commitment to landmark resolution on Women, Peace and Security’, 13 Oct. 2015, <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=52252#.Vlmx2XtX9Jg>. (Unless otherwise noted at point of citation, all URLs cited in this article were accessible on 15 Jan. 2016.)

<sup>11</sup> United Nations Security Council (UNSC), Resolutions 1325 (Oct. 2000), 1820 (June 2008), 1888 (Sept. 2009), 1889 (Oct. 2009), 1960 (Dec. 2010), 2106 (June 2013), 2122 (Oct. 2013) and 2242 (Oct. 2015).

<sup>12</sup> Sangeeta Budhiraja, Susana T. Fried and Alexandra Teixeira, ‘Spelling it out: from alphabet soup to sexual rights and gender justice’, in Amy Lind, ed., *Development, sexual rights and global governance* (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), p. 132.

<sup>13</sup> Picq and Thiel, ‘Introduction: sexualities in world politics’, p. 5.

viewed to be ‘manly’ enough or were assumed to be ‘gay’.<sup>14</sup> The report notes that the social comprehension of gender is vital to understanding homophobic violence. Furthermore, the media portrayal of ‘gay’ as a ‘third sex’ threatening the male and female binary is an extension of socialized homophobia. The report notes: ‘Fear of “feminized” men reveals only hatred of women. No one should be killed for their looks or clothing. No one should be assaulted or mutilated for the way they walk or style their hair.’<sup>15</sup> The report reveals ways in which lesbians continue to be overlooked as a population vulnerable to SGBV, stating:

Despite wide acknowledgement that violence against women is a serious crisis in Iraq, state authorities have ignored it and most NGOs have concentrated on ‘public’, political patterns of attacks on men. Amid this neglect, the question of whether and how violence targets women for non-heterosexual behaviors has been doubly neglected.<sup>16</sup>

Indeed, lesbians as a group of women vulnerable to SGBV remain nearly invisible in today’s conversation about conflict-related violence.

These are just some examples of the forms of SGBV that could well be addressed by policy directed by the WPS architecture, were it to incorporate a queer lens. Similarly, heteronormative UN policies and national action plans that neglect the consideration of how homophobic and transphobic violence erupts in conflict-related environments fail LGBTQ individuals.

### *Citizen security and the LGBTQ population*

Determining who is in need of protection by the state is a charged and political act. Human security, a term introduced by the 1994 UNDP *Human Development Report*, is ‘people centered’ security.<sup>17</sup> A gendered approach to human security allows a focus on the links between the types of insecurity faced by individuals in conflict-related environments. For example: ‘It is not unusual for violent conflict to leave in its wake famine, disease, and even ecological devastation.’<sup>18</sup> Recognizing how the same gender constructions give rise to SGBV against women and against the LGBTQ population is part of establishing these links.

Feminists who influenced the writing of UNSCR 1325 and UNSCR 1820 drew on the human security framework.<sup>19</sup> As Lene Hansen writes: ‘For problems or facts to become questions of security, they need therefore to be successfully constructed as such within political discourse.’<sup>20</sup> Feminists look to human security framing as one way to include gender in this discourse of security. Yet Hansen

<sup>14</sup> Human Rights Watch, “‘They want us exterminated’: murder, torture, sexual orientation and gender in Iraq”, *Human Rights Watch* online (New York, Aug. 2009), <https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/iraq0809web.pdf>, accessed 22 Jan. 2016.

<sup>15</sup> Human Rights Watch, “‘They want us exterminated’”, p. 11.

<sup>16</sup> Human Rights Watch, “‘They want us exterminated’”, pp. 42–3.

<sup>17</sup> United Nations Development Programme, ‘New dimensions of human security’, in *Human Development Report 1994* (New York: UNDP and Oxford University Press).

<sup>18</sup> Aili Mari Tripp, ‘Toward a gender perspective on human security’, in Aili Mari Tripp, Myra Marx Ferree and Christine Ewig, eds, *Gender, violence and human security* (New York: New York University Press, 2013), p. 15.

<sup>19</sup> Tripp, ‘Toward a gender perspective on human security’, p. 11.

<sup>20</sup> Lene Hansen, *Security as practice: discourse analysis and the Bosnian war* (London: Routledge, 2006), pp. 33–6.

continues: ‘Even if one speaks security in the name of the individual, claiming the rights, threats or concerns of the individual constitutes an engagement in the public and political field; “individual security” is in this respect always collective and political.’<sup>21</sup> Human security discourse about securitizing the human rights of the individual ultimately requires engaging in a politics of citizen security.

A full picture of those who experience gender-based insecurity requires an intersectional context-specific analysis of the individuals who may be most vulnerable to rape and other forms of SGBV. This analysis must account for ethnic, religious, social and political drivers of violence. An intersectional approach is a way to better understand whose interests are represented when the categories *women* or *women and girls* are listed in policy documents. Intersectionality is a tool for recognizing simultaneous and cross-cutting oppressions, originally introduced by black feminists.<sup>22</sup> An intersectional awareness of the type of woman present at the table during peace negotiations enables an understanding of what an individual’s race and class background brings to her lived experience in addition to her gender. A related point is the continuing controversy attached to the issue of who gets to be labelled a woman, especially as trans visibility increases globally. Intersectionality is also fundamental to framing violence against men who are perceived feminine as deriving from vulnerabilities similar to those faced by women raped during conflict. Some argue that, as a more intersectional approach is used to understand the drivers of sexual violence in conflict, data will reveal that, rather than sexual violence against men being a rare occurrence, men may number as many as one in three survivors of sexual violence. Dubravka Zarkov explains: ‘The invisibility of men who endured sexual violence is related to the position of masculinity and the male body within nationalist discourses on ethnicity, nationhood and statehood.’<sup>23</sup> Zarkov’s work shows that it is impossible to separate the parts played by ethnicity, nationalism, sexuality and gender in the context of violence in conflict, and that all must be present for a complete intersectional analysis that encapsulates the targeted demographic. Using this intersectional lens, we see that SGBV targeting the LGBTQ population occurs in similar ways to the SGBV already highlighted by the WPS architecture.

## **Gender limitations in the WPS architecture**

The WPS architecture refers not only to the eight Security Council resolutions passed between 2000 and 2015, but also to the international NGOs monitoring WPS and the policy developed to implement the WPS documents. Each of these three elements offers different spaces for voices and representation of women concerned with international peace and security. Individuals’ ability to participate

<sup>21</sup> Hansen, *Security as practice*, p. 36.

<sup>22</sup> Kimberle Crenshaw, ‘Margins: intersectionality, identity politics and violence against women of color’, *Stanford Law Review* 43: 6, 1991, pp. 1241–99.

<sup>23</sup> Dubravka Zarkov, ‘The body of the other man: sexual violence and the construction of masculinity, sexuality and ethnicity in Croatian media’, in Caroline Moser and Fiona Clark, eds, *Victims, perpetrators or actors? Gender, armed conflict, and political violence* (London: Zed, 2001), p. 73.

in the WPS architecture is limited by their lived intersection of social, economic and political access.

The words ‘gender’ and ‘women’ are often used interchangeably, an especially problematic practice in implementing the WPS resolutions and operationalizing the WPS architecture. The conceptual slippage between woman and gender is a topic with which feminists have long grappled, as Terrell Carver explains: ‘In many contexts one finds that a reference to gender is a reference to women, as if men, males, and masculinities were all unproblematic in that regard—or perhaps simply nothing to do with gender at all.’<sup>24</sup> Carver continues: ‘Why map gender onto sex as one-to-one, just when the term was helping to make visible the ambiguities of sexuality, orientation, choice, and change that have been undercover for centuries?’<sup>25</sup> To develop this point, violence against gay men is arguably not relevant to the work of the WPS architecture when considered from the perspective of sex, though this limited view neglects to account for the way assumptions pertaining to masculinity and femininity operate as a part of social norms and practices about gender.

Cisprivilege is apparent in the WPS architecture, probably owing in part to a lack of participation by LGBTQ individuals in its creation. Examples of cisprivilege include the fact that cisgender women are not denied access to medical attention, bathrooms or domestic violence shelters on the basis of their bodies and identities.<sup>26</sup> Without an awareness of the limitations faced by those who do not enjoy cisprivilege, these concerns are overlooked; and this is most often evident in assumptions built into a binary understanding of gender. Attention to the power relations between the masculine and the feminine in a gendered hierarchy is also absent from those implementing and developing the WPS architecture. Importantly, feminist security scholarship engages with security issues in a way that highlights gendered power relations not generally interrogated in international relations work. An especially important aspect of this understanding of gendered power relations is an awareness of how masculinity operates in a way that may normalize and promote rape of the ‘other’ during conflict.<sup>27</sup> This ‘other’ may be the homosexual, as has been observed when conflict-related SGBV targets the LGBTQ population where same-sex relationships are perceived as threatening to traditional heterosexual social norms.

While UNSCR 1325 directs attention to gender-based insecurity in conflict-related environments, it also reinforces a limited discourse of gender. This creates narrow categories of who is most vulnerable to violence owing to their gender. These limiting categories, meant to secure all women, can ultimately create even more insecure environments for certain women who endure intersecting oppressions because of their sexual orientation and gender identity. For example,

<sup>24</sup> Terrell Carver, *Gender is not a synonym for women* (London: Lynne Rienner, 1996), p. 5.

<sup>25</sup> Carver, *Gender is not a synonym for women*, p. 5.

<sup>26</sup> Julia R. Johnson, ‘Cisprivilege, intersectionality, and the criminalization of CeCe McDonald: why intercultural communication needs transgender studies’, *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication* 6: 2, 2013, pp. 135–44.

<sup>27</sup> Maria Eriksson Baaz and Maria Stern, ‘Why do soldiers rape? Masculinity, violence and sexuality in the armed forces in the Congo (DRC)’, *International Studies Quarterly* 53: 2, 2009, pp. 495–518.

often lesbians who are raped experience SGBV because of how heteronormative masculinity operates socially and politically. As another example, the identification of *women and girls* as a category of SGBV victims requires further analysis. The categorization assumes that women are the caretakers of children and that raising children is a feminine trait; it also prioritizes motherhood as a vulnerable category. While motherhood may make women vulnerable in certain ways, it is equally if not more important to recognize other aspects of gender identity as targets of violence. For example, a person's gender in addition to their race or class may make them much more vulnerable to violence than motherhood alone. Also, this categorization almost always assumes that the children most vulnerable to SGBV are girls, despite growing evidence that boys are also targets of SGBV. Gender mainstreaming in UN operations is intended to work towards some of the objectives at the core of the WPS documents. Yet the way in which UN gender specialists understand gender is at the crux of the gender discourse used in the national action plans that states develop to track and monitor implementation of WPS documents pertaining to SGBV. Appointed gender specialists have a mandate to work for gender equality under UN-directed initiatives. Although the title 'gender specialist' suggests the office should handle issues of gender more broadly, a focus on *women* or *women and girls* may result, depending on the definition of gender applied by the specialist.

The characterization as either masculine or feminine can be ascribed not just to people, but also to states and institutions. Women's organizations continue to be characterized as weak and to suffer from substantially limited funding when compared with the amount of money devoted to the military-based operations perceived as masculine. Similarly, former colonizing states continue to carry a masculine identity while those that have been colonized are typically viewed as feminine. Elizabeth Philipose explains:

If we consider the colonial configuration of modern Western versions of gender, it is the case that masculinity is a raced, classed and sexualized category, encompassing the attributes of the idea of the human as white, Euro-derived, propertied, heterosexual and male. In this sense, to be male and called underdeveloped is to be feminized as an unfit male, terms that signal both the subject and object of the assumptions of deviant sexuality, impotency and pollution.<sup>28</sup>

V. Spike Peterson also draws our attention to privilege and gender hierarchy, noting that not all men are privileged and that in privileging what is masculinized, what is feminized is in turn devalued.<sup>29</sup> Without awareness of how masculinity informs gender relations in post-conflict sites, important power dynamics cannot be recognized.

Questions about the safety of LGBTQ individuals continue to be lost in work in the international peace and security arena that is intended to be gender-inclusive. The WPS architecture does not address homophobia or transphobia as a form

<sup>28</sup> Elizabeth Philipose, 'Decolonizing the racial grammar of international law', in Chandra Mohanty, Minnie Bruce Talpade and Robin L. Riley, eds, *Feminism and war* (London: Zed, 2008), pp. 104–05.

<sup>29</sup> V. Spike Peterson, 'Thinking through intersectionality and war', *Race, Gender & Class* 14: 3/4, 2007, p. 13.

of SGBV. Silence on these issues may be intentional if those who are creating the reports and indicators do not consider tracking homophobia and transphobia relevant to the work of the WPS architecture. An absence of LGBTQ individuals is apparent in the indicators proposed by the UN Technical Working Group on Global Indicators for 1325 (TWGGI 1325).<sup>30</sup> These indicators pay no attention to sexual minorities as potential targets of SGBV. Of the 26 indicators currently proposed by TWGGI 1325, none specifically mentions the LGBTQ population. Five of the indicators specifically mention 'women and girls' as a category and seven of the indicators refer to 'gender'. Three examples of these indicators are: 'percentage of peace agreements with specific provisions to improve the security and status of women and girls'; 'extent to which national laws to protect women's and girls' human rights are in line with international standards'; and 'percentage of referred cases of SGBV against women and girls that are reported, investigated and sentenced'.

While the WPS resolutions at the Security Council were crucial to bringing attention to SGBV at the international level, civil society organizations have done much of the work of tracking and monitoring the WPS-related documents. Both the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP) and Peacewomen, a project of the organization Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), monitor various aspects of the implementation of UNSCR 1325.<sup>31</sup> GNWP writes annual reports with the help of local members of civil society in UN member states to report on progress from the grassroots perspective. Peacewomen assesses Security Council resolutions and country-specific resolutions using gender and thematic analysis. As Peacewomen states: 'Civil society has taken ownership of the agenda and used it as a tool to advance equality and human security.'<sup>32</sup> While this is encouraging, the LGBTQ population has been overlooked in this process, which uses a limited conception of gender that primarily monitors the needs of women narrowly understood and captured within a heterosexual family and social structure. Because civil society organizations such as these are leading the way in holding states accountable to implementing the WPS resolutions, any efforts by these organizations to queer this conversation could have a significant impact.

GNWP develops indicators to monitor and assess different aspects of the WPS architecture, and has been producing an annual civil society report for the past several years.<sup>33</sup> While local, civil society monitoring of WPS implementation is welcome, within these indicators there is a lack of gender analysis appropriate for non-heterosexual family structures. The October 2014 global summary of trends includes eleven indicators with two additional subsections A and B, four of

<sup>30</sup> United Nations Security Council, *Women and peace and security: report of the Secretary-General*, 6 April 2010, <http://undocs.org/s/2010/173>.

<sup>31</sup> The author was an intern for both Peacewomen and GNWP and a consultant for the 2012 GNWP report.

<sup>32</sup> Peacewomen, *Women, peace and security handbook: compilation and analysis of United Nations Security Council resolution language 2000–2012*, 2nd edn, [http://wilpf.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/women\\_peace\\_and\\_security\\_handbook\\_-\\_second\\_edition.pdf](http://wilpf.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/women_peace_and_security_handbook_-_second_edition.pdf), p. 10.

<sup>33</sup> GNWP, *Security Council Resolution 1325: civil society monitoring report 2014: women count*, Oct. 2014, [http://www.gnwp.org/sites/default/files/resource-field\\_media/2014Global%20Report\\_Aug13\\_2015HiRes\\_Jim.pdf](http://www.gnwp.org/sites/default/files/resource-field_media/2014Global%20Report_Aug13_2015HiRes_Jim.pdf).



which include the word 'gender'. One of the indicators with reference to gender specifically measures cases of SGBV reported.<sup>34</sup> Though the monitoring report does not call attention to the vulnerabilities of the LGBTQ population to SGBV, these indicators provide an opportunity to begin to collect data about the impact of SGBV on LGBTQ individuals. As part of its monitoring work, Peacewomen conducted a gender analysis of 525 resolutions.<sup>35</sup> The review is concerned with monitoring gender and women's rights in WPS country-specific resolutions, as stated in the foreword to the handbook. To this end the Peacewomen handbook remarks on 'good practice language' and makes further recommendations for country-specific resolutions. The category 'women and girls' does appear in two of the themes, though attention is also called to the need for a 'gender perspective' or 'gendered approach' in five others and to 'gender roles' in the SGBV theme. The report does not mention how these themes apply to the needs of the LGBTQ population as part of a more progressive normative approach to gender. Some of the themes that provide the most opportunity for incorporating a queer lens are 'sexual and gender-based violence', 'human rights and humanitarian law' and 'displacement and humanitarian assistance'.

A similar lapse in gender analysis is also exhibited by the NGO Working Group (NGOWG), a group of about a dozen NGOs that operates on a consensual basis to bring issues to the Security Council from the civil society point of view. The NGOWG sees the key challenges to the implementation of the WPS agenda as 'the need for strong, concerted leadership on women, peace and security; the need for a systematic approach to women, peace and security issues; and the need for concrete monitoring of progress and gaps in implementation'.<sup>36</sup> Consider the following comment by the NGOWG:

Sustainable peace depends on the participation of women in all decision-making to prevent violent conflict and to protect all civilians. The NGO Working Group believes that a broad and positive impact on the lives of all people experiencing conflict will result from full implementation of SCR 1325 and promotion of the Beijing Platform for Action, CEDAW [the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women] and other supporting instruments. We further believe that implementation of SCR 1325 is a necessary tool for the prevention of armed conflict and to facilitate inclusion of gender in the ongoing peace and security discourse taking place within the UN and internationally.<sup>37</sup>

Here the first sentence of the quote refers to the participation of the category 'women'; by the third sentence, the language shifts to the 'inclusion of gender'. This shift is crucial, because it seems to represent a use of the words 'women' and 'gender' as interchangeable. Furthermore, the NGOWG promotes a gender perspective only possible when the impact of femininity and masculinity on peace

<sup>34</sup> GNWP, *Security Council Resolution 1325: civil society monitoring report 2014*, pp. 10–11.

<sup>35</sup> Peacewomen, *Women, peace and security handbook*, p. 14.

<sup>36</sup> NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, 'Security Council Monthly Action Points (MAP)', <http://www.womenpeacesecurity.org/advocacy/map/>.

<sup>37</sup> NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, 'About us', <http://www.womenpeacesecurity.org/about/>.

and security discourse, both locally and nationally, is accounted for. It is unclear how 'gender' is a category different from 'women' in the way the two are utilized by the NGOWG.

Participants in the NGOWG, including Amnesty International, Oxfam International and MADRE, are well placed to bring issues to the Security Council related to the WPS architecture. The NGOWG produces monthly action points with analysis of country-specific situations and action points to address these gender-related security concerns. None of the monthly action points for 2015 highlight lesbian or trans women or any LGBTQ individuals as vulnerable within any of the action points for country-specific situations; however they do point to the need for sex and age disaggregated data (SADD).<sup>38</sup> Though it is understandable that a working group focusing on the participation of women in conflict-related work would emphasize women in their vision, it is of fundamental importance to recognize that all people regardless of gender must take part in the work necessary in striving for gender equality. In other words, it is crucial to include the vulnerabilities of LGBTQ individuals in work to address SGBV. This requires a macro analysis of social and political dynamics that encompasses a non-heteronormative political discourse of gender.

### *Improving implementation of WPS*

In order to capture SGBV targeting individuals based on perceived or actual sexual orientation and gender identity, analysis has to move beyond heteronormative assumptions. In the March 2015 report of the Secretary-General on conflict-related sexual violence, targeting of LGBTQ individuals was acknowledged for the first time: the section reporting on sexual violence in Iraq stated that 'attacks on women and girls as well as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex individuals have taken place as a form of "moral cleansing" by armed groups'.<sup>39</sup> Expanding indicators to be more inclusive of gender non-conforming individuals and thereby to capture other forms of SGBV currently undocumented within the WPS monitoring mechanisms is one way to address the shortcoming. Also, implementation of the WPS resolutions and gender mainstreaming training that highlights how masculinity and femininity operate locally would better enable recognition of these forms of gendered violence.

A radical reform to the current response to conflict-related SGBV requires analysis to move beyond the assumption that rape is perpetrated primarily, if not solely, on women by men. A more comprehensive response to this violence must also consider the social, political and economic factors that drive perpetrators of SGBV. Furthermore, data show that rape is not always used as a weapon in all conflicts, and that when it is the violence is sometimes targeted at feminine men or men of a particular ethnicity, an under-studied phenomenon. Elisabeth

<sup>38</sup> NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and security, 'Advocacy', <http://www.womenpeacesecurity.org/advocacy/>.

<sup>39</sup> UNSC, 'Conflict-related sexual violence: report of the Secretary-General', 23 March 2015, [http://www.security-councilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s\\_2015\\_203.pdf](http://www.security-councilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_2015_203.pdf), p. 10.

Jean Wood notes that sexual violence may take many different forms depending on the conflict, and also that 'in some conflicts, the pattern of sexual violence is symmetric, with all parties to the war engaging in sexual violence to roughly the same extent; in other conflicts, it is very asymmetric'.<sup>40</sup> Using a case-study analysis, Wood found that sexual violence may target women and girls but may also target men; and that some acts of sexual violence are committed by individuals and some by groups. An adequate response to SGBV requires sensitivity to local nuances of the state of LGBTQ rights and cultural understanding of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Collecting SADD is necessary to gain a better understanding of when, where and why SGBV occurs. As part of the move beyond a heteronormative paradigm of SGBV, conflict-related response programmes need to expand on women-focused workshops to train counsellors and health workers to be sensitive to the needs of LGBTQ individuals as well, include LGBTQ organizers and community leaders in courses and training, and create safe spaces for LGBTQ individuals. SADD could help answer questions about how and when lesbians become targets of SGBV, whether LGBTQ victims of SGBV are accessing the WPS programmes in post-conflict situations, and how the WPS architecture can incorporate tools to support those who may become targets for homophobic and transphobic violence.

Though one might argue that LGBTQ individuals are a small population on which to focus an analysis in a conflict zone, a lack of data leaves this assumption unverified. Writing about her work queering security studies in Northern Ireland, Sandra McEvoy problematizes the assumption that the primary referent of research is a heterosexual man, writing: 'It is irresponsible for several key reasons, but primarily because in actual fact we have no verifiable sense of the number of LGBT-identified people living in any postconflict zone.'<sup>41</sup> It is difficult to capture information relevant to the LGBTQ population unless data are disaggregated in a way that also includes an understanding of families and sexualities broader than that captured by binary heteronormative categories. As the United Nations Commissioner for Human Rights reported to the Human Rights Council:

Quantifying homophobic and transphobic violence is complicated by the fact that few states have systems in place for monitoring, recording, and reporting these incidents. Even where systems exist, incidents may go unreported or are misreported because victims distrust the police, are afraid of reprisals or threats to privacy, are reluctant to identify themselves as LGBT or because those responsible for registering the incidents fail to recognize motives of perpetrators.<sup>42</sup>

Screening tools, whereby health officials confidentially ask survivors of SGBV if they believe the violence was driven by homophobia or transphobia, as well as how they self-identify in terms of sexual orientation and gender identity, would

<sup>40</sup> Elisabeth Jean Wood, 'Variation in sexual violence during war', *Politics and Society* 34: 3, Fall 2006, p. 308.

<sup>41</sup> Sandra McEvoy, 'Queering security studies in Northern Ireland: problem, practice, and practitioner', in Picq and Thiel, eds, *Sexualities in world politics*, p. 148.

<sup>42</sup> Human Rights Council, 'Discriminatory laws and practices and acts of violence against individuals based on their sexual orientation and gender identity', para. 23.

improve efforts to gather information about this demographic. Some public health officials have begun to tackle this issue in other contexts with improved data-collection practices, including the Trans-health Information Project based in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.<sup>43</sup> To be inclusive, monitoring work to implement WPS documents in conflict-related environments must consider local gender norms, including those of LGBTQ individuals.

### *Homophobia and other institutional barriers to queer inclusion*

What explains the absence of the LGBTQ population from the UNSC WPS resolutions, from NGOs' advocacy on behalf of the documents and from policy implementing them? Each of these locations faces different challenges to queer inclusion.

In her introduction to *Development, sexual rights and global governance*, Amy Lind seeks to address 'notions of gender and sexuality that are inscribed in development institutions, politics, and frameworks, often through a heteronormative and gender normative lens'.<sup>44</sup> Unfortunately, much of the development work of UN organizations, including women's rights organizations, reproduces gender norms through binary monitoring indicators and ignores the work of queer theorists and advocates. More research utilizing a queer lens is necessary to determine how marginalized trans individuals experience violence in conflict and what protections should be provided in conflict-related environments. Homophobia at local, state and international level may also be at the root of the lack of attention to male rape by men on the part of most NGOs addressing SGBV. Many organizations addressing the violence and discrimination women face continue to neglect the additional marginalization faced by lesbians and trans women.

Additional explanations for the neglect of LGBTQ individuals in the WPS architecture may include political expediency and strategic essentialism. To draw global attention to violence against women as a serious issue, a strategic decision may be taken to define women only in what are perceived as less threatening terms, namely as cisgender heterosexual women. At the NGO level, most funding for aid to survivors of SGBV continues to be based on an essentialist categorization that defines rape primarily as perpetrated by men against women, leaving male and many LGBTQ victims out of the equation.

## **A theoretical framework beyond heteronormativity**

The tense border between feminist and queer theory provides a useful context for a gendered analysis of the heteronormativity in the WPS architecture.<sup>45</sup> Diane Richardson explains: 'This tension within and between feminist and queer

<sup>43</sup> T. Benjamin Singer, 'The profusion of things: the "transgender matrix" and demographic imaginaries in US public health', *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 2: 1, 2015, pp. 58–76.

<sup>44</sup> Amy Lind, 'Introduction: development, global governance and sexual subjectivities', in Amy Lind, ed., *Development, sexual rights and global governance* (London: Routledge, 2010), p. 2.

<sup>45</sup> J. Ann Tickner, 'What is your research program? Some feminist answers to International Relations methodological questions', *International Studies Quarterly* 49: 1, 2005, pp. 1–21.

theory can be understood as a pull between the disciplinary and enabling effects of gender and sexual categories'.<sup>46</sup> Queer theory in many ways overlaps with feminist theory, and the two face some of the same challenges within the discipline of International Relations. Despite disagreements over the tensions between feminist theory and queer theory regarding the borders of each discipline, an intersection of the two serves to enrich conversations about addressing SGBV in conflict-related environments. For example, the book *Sexualities in world politics* considers how queer theory and feminist international relations work together to inform how gender operates:

Both perspectives share a commitment to redefining conceptual foundations of IR away from familiar gender-neutral, patriarchal narratives. Both denounce hierarchies based on sexual difference as well as the obscuring of such inequalities by patriarch practices. They both seek to problematize theoretical assumptions founded on hegemonic masculinities. Each contests claims of universal knowledge based largely on the status of privileged men. Each seeks to bring sexual difference as fundamental to the understanding of global politics.<sup>47</sup>

Yet as Weber points out, the value a queer theory brings to other disciplines is largely absent from the discipline of IR, kept at the border rather than integrated in any serious way.<sup>48</sup>

Until very recently, feminist IR scholars overlooked trans people entirely. Trans-theorizing corrects this in important ways that recognize both the experiences of trans people as securitized individuals and the trans experience as a challenge to binary thinking about gender. V. Spike Peterson questions this binary, either/or thinking and the idea that there is a homogeneous woman or man by rejecting 'institutionalization and normalization of heterosexuality and the corollary exclusion of non-heterosexual identities and practices'.<sup>49</sup>

Untangling the influence of cisprivilege in research practice requires feminist theorists to acknowledge the influence of a binary categorization of gender. Trans-theorists similarly challenge the limitations of strict categories of gender, as Susan Stryker, Paisley Currah and L. J. Moore explain:

Rather than seeing genders as classes or categories that by definition contain only one kind of thing (which raises unavoidable questions about the masked rules and normativities that constitute qualifications for categorical membership), we understand genders as potentially porous and permeable spatial territories (arguably numbering more than two), each capable of supporting rich and rapidly proliferating ecologies of embodied difference.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Diane Richardson, 'Bordering theory', in Diane Richardson, Janice McLaughlan and Mark E. Casey, eds, *Intersections between feminist and queer theory* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p. 22.

<sup>47</sup> Picq and Thiel, 'Introduction: sexualities in world politics', p. 7.

<sup>48</sup> Weber, 'Why is there no queer international theory?'. For some examples of this work, see Rahul Rao, 'Queer questions', *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, conference keynote speech, 2014, pp. 1–19; Nivi Manchanda, 'Queering the Pashtun: Afghan sexuality in the homo-nationalist imaginary', *Third World Quarterly* 36: 1, 2015, pp. 130–46; Laura J. Shepherd and Laura Sjoberg, 'Trans-bodies in/of war(s): cisprivilege and contemporary security strategy', *Feminist Review* 5: 23, 2012, pp. 5–22.

<sup>49</sup> V. Spike Peterson, 'Sexing political identity/nationalism as heterosexism', *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 1: 1, 1999, p. 39.

<sup>50</sup> Susan Stryker, Paisley Currah and L. J. Moore, 'Introduction: trans-, trans, or transgender?', *WSQ: Women's Studies Quarterly* 36: 3–4, 2008, p. 12.

Trans-theorizing pushes feminist IR scholarship beyond the binary categories of male and female to instead consider a spectrum of identities. For example, a transgender woman in the process of transitioning from a male to a female identity might not be captured within the woman category, but is also not accurately placed in the male category. Furthermore, some countries, including Nepal and India,<sup>51</sup> recognize a third sex that would also be unrecognized by a system of organizing identities limited to the binary categories 'woman' and 'man'. It must be noted that reports which use the words 'woman' and 'gender' interchangeably neglect to consider gender as it is experienced beyond the stereotype of heteronormative woman, erasing many experiences.

How those who implement the WPS architecture define gender has practical implications for policy development. For example, how gender is defined determines who is included in monitoring work by NGOs. Similarly, the discourse about gender is crucial when states develop national action plans to map out ways to incorporate WPS resolutions into peace and security work. There is no universal application of gender by those implementing the WPS architecture. On the one hand, the UN Women website source for concepts and definitions defines gender as:

social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context/time-specific and changeable. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context.<sup>52</sup>

Significantly, this definition recognizes that gender is socially constructed, context/time-specific and changeable. However, this definition of gender falls short of a broader understanding of gender fluidity that also includes LGBTQ identities, limiting the available options to women and men, male and female. Such cissexism also appears in the political discourse of gender, quite notably around the UN gender-mainstreaming project. The UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) defines gender mainstreaming as:

The process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of women as well as of men an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres, so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal of mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>51</sup> Manesh Shrestha, 'Nepal census recognizes "third gender"', CNN online, 31 May 2011, <http://www.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/asiapcf/05/31/nepal.census.gender/>; Geeta Pandey, 'India court recognizes transgender people are third gender', BBC online, 15 April 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-27031180>.

<sup>52</sup> UN Women, 'Concepts and definitions', <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsanddefinitions.htm>.

<sup>53</sup> UN Women, 'Intergovernmental mandates on gender mainstreaming', <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/intergovernmentalmandates.htm>.

Again this definition addresses gender equality, but with an awareness of only two static binary categories: women and men.

The use of the term ‘gender’ varies greatly across the various WPS documents. A discourse analysis of the eight WPS resolutions informed by queer theory reveals how the term gender operates in the WPS architecture and is then applied in any gender mainstreaming work for international peace and security. Laura Shepherd’s discourse analysis of UNSCR 1325 provides a helpful tool to extend the idea of a need for a ‘radical reform’ of gender perspectives in conflict-related environments to include the LGBTQ population. Shepherd reviews the ways gender is invoked throughout the resolution, noting: ‘Gender is articulated in UNSCR 1325 as a “perspective” (preamble), and also as a prefix to “sensitive training efforts” (Article 7) and “based violence” (Article 10). Furthermore, there are “gender considerations” (Article 15) and “gender dimensions” (Article 16).’<sup>54</sup> Shepherd importantly argues that the reference to a ‘gender perspective’ in the final sentence of UNSCR 1325 provides the potential for radical reform.

Across the eight UNSCR WPS documents, there seems to have been a lost opportunity to radically reform the way gender is understood in peace and security work. UNSCR 1325 mentions gender ten times, whereas UNSCR 1820, perhaps the second most frequently referenced of the WPS documents, does not mention gender once and instead relies on the categories ‘women’ or ‘women and girls’ to denote vulnerable populations. Fortunately, UNSCR 2106, calling for accountability for perpetrators of sexual violence, again mentions gender and for the first time in the WPS documents also calls attention to ‘men and boys’ as possible victims; yet still LGBTQ individuals remain absent. LGBTQ individuals vulnerable to homophobic and transphobic violence remain invisible in the WPS documents, with no mention in any of the resolutions. While the understanding of who is vulnerable to conflict-related violence, particularly SGBV, has evolved since UNSCR 1325, LGBTQ individuals remain overlooked as a marginalized and vulnerable population. This discourse about victims of SGBV has policy implications when translated into the categories used to develop indicators and to determine which vulnerable populations deserve targeted services and funding. Protection of LGBTQ individuals from SGBV has not entered the discourse in the WPS architecture in the same way as protection for heterosexual women has.

### *Unique vulnerabilities of the LGBTQ population*

Although WPS literature does not consider how this absence of LGBTQ individuals manifests in the field, Jennifer Rumbach and Kyle Knight highlight the harms of exclusion in the data as well as in services denied to the LGBTQ refugee population. LGBTQ refugees experience the impact of limited gender categories that ‘can manifest on forms or in official data registers, or in the ways

<sup>54</sup> Laura J. Shepherd, *Gender, violence and security: discourse as practice* (London: Zed, 2008), p. 120.

programs or infrastructure are designed and constructed'.<sup>55</sup> For example, *aravanis* or non-binary individuals (neither male/man nor female/woman) were denied access to toilets and showers in evacuation centres after the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami as they were designed exclusively to cater to male or female persons.<sup>56</sup> Where people are compelled to migrate from conflict-related environments this becomes especially relevant to those who may be seeking cross-border refuge or asylum with government-issued identification that may not represent their identity. Cissexist programmatic work neglects to take these issues into account when developing programmes to serve populations in emergencies and conflict-related environments.

Though information about LGBTQ individuals in conflict-related situations remains very limited, data from some humanitarian emergencies do shed light on the topic. Rumbach and Knight review how sexual and gender minorities experience discrimination in humanitarian emergencies and report: 'Relief programs targeting women only, for example, have been problematic for transgender people and people who do not live in a home with a female who qualifies as head of household, such as gay men.'<sup>57</sup> As another example of inadequate work to target sexual and gender minorities, LGBTI<sup>58</sup> refugees in Kenya, the largest refugee population in the world as of August 2012, were unable to find any focused programmes within the refugee camp and instead had to travel to Nairobi for services. In their report the authors highlight the need for people to feel safe declaring their non-normative family structure to humanitarian aid workers, explaining:

Same-sex families can also be negatively affected during processes such as refugee resettlement if they do not feel able, or are not offered the opportunity, to declare their partnership, for instance, because they are asked limiting questions about the opposite sex, or because they believe the staff member handling their case may bar them from receiving any benefits if they disclose a same-sex relationship.<sup>59</sup>

As another example, after Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, Louisiana same-sex families were denied federal aid and health care by the Red Cross because of the way 'families' are defined by the organization. It is clear that without sensitivity to the needs of LGBTQ individuals as part of humanitarian aid response, this population remains under-served. The same is true for vulnerable LGBTQ individuals overlooked by the WPS architecture.

Reports are starting to emerge that confirm the presence of conflict-related violence directed towards individuals because of their sexual orientation or

<sup>55</sup> Jennifer Rumbach and Kyle Knight, 'Sexual and gender minorities in humanitarian emergencies', in L. W. Roeder Jr, ed., *Issues of gender and sexual orientation in humanitarian emergencies*, 'Humanitarian solutions in the 21st century' (Geneva: Springer, 2014), p. 40.

<sup>56</sup> Rumbach and Knight, 'Sexual and gender minorities in humanitarian emergencies', p. 40.

<sup>57</sup> Rumbach and Knight, 'Sexual and gender minorities in humanitarian emergencies', p. 41.

<sup>58</sup> Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex. Some link intersex individuals to the LGBT community, a group not explicitly acknowledged by the LGBTQ acronym. An intersex person is born with sexual anatomy, reproductive organs and/or chromosome patterns that do not fit the typical definition of male or female: 'Fact sheet: LGBT rights: frequently asked questions', *Free & Equal* online, [https://www.unfe.org/system/unfe-7-UN\\_Fact\\_Sheets\\_v6\\_-\\_FAQ.pdf](https://www.unfe.org/system/unfe-7-UN_Fact_Sheets_v6_-_FAQ.pdf), accessed 22 Jan. 2016.

<sup>59</sup> Rumbach and Knight, 'Sexual and gender minorities in humanitarian emergencies', p. 41.



gender identity. A number of organizations collaborated to produce reports about homophobic and transphobic violence in Iraq. In November 2014 OutRight Action International, in conjunction with MADRE and the Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq (OWFI), released two reports that address the targeted violence against the LGBTQ population in Iraq. The report *We're here* includes the stories of three gay men, a lesbian and a transgender woman.<sup>60</sup> Mahmud, a transgender woman, states that her only dream is to have the freedom to choose her gender and sexual orientation. She describes how in 2011 three men raped her and stole pictures of her dressed in women's clothes. When Mahmud's family discovered the photos, she said they 'started pursuing me with the intent to kill'.<sup>61</sup>

Whether the violence documented by OutRight Action International is representative of the type of violence targeted at LGBTQ individuals in other conflict-related environments remains unknown. Several of the WPS resolutions call for better tracking and monitoring of commitments by the Secretary-General to address rape and sexual violence.<sup>62</sup> Collecting SADD is one way to begin to understand the public health needs of LGBTQ individuals and their experience of violence. In the 2011 report *Sex and age matter* the authors explain: 'To ensure that vulnerabilities, needs and access to life-saving services are best understood and responded to, it is necessary to collect information based on sex and age.'<sup>63</sup> The report continues: 'Proper citation, analysis and use of sex and age disaggregated data or SADD, allows operational agencies to deliver assistance more effectively than without SADD.'<sup>64</sup> Public health officials have begun to collect such data in some humanitarian emergencies to better understand the impact of these circumstances on people with marginalized sexual orientations and gender identities.

### *Transnational focus on homophobic and transphobic violence*

LGBTQ rights as human rights are now on the global agenda. In 2011 the UN Human Rights Council released the first report to address homophobia and transphobia.<sup>65</sup> The report identified discriminatory laws criminalizing homosexuality and imposing arbitrary arrest and detention, or in some cases the death penalty, on LGBTQ individuals as being in violation of international standards and obligations under international human rights law. The report outlines a disturbing reality for LGBTQ individuals, including that in 76 countries it remains illegal to engage in same-sex behaviour and in five of those homosexuals are subject to the death penalty. In the same year, and in response to a request from the Human Rights

<sup>60</sup> International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission, 'We're here: Iraqi LGBT people's accounts of violence and rights abuse', 19 Nov. 2014, IGLHRC online, [https://www.outrightinternational.org/content/exposing-persecution-lgbt-individuals-iraq#were\\_here](https://www.outrightinternational.org/content/exposing-persecution-lgbt-individuals-iraq#were_here), accessed 22 Jan. 2016.

<sup>61</sup> International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission, *We're here*, p. 7.

<sup>62</sup> S/RES/1960, p. 3; S/RES/2106, p. 3.

<sup>63</sup> Dyan Mazurana, Prisca Benelli, Huma Gupta and Peter Walker, *Sex and age matter: improving humanitarian response in emergencies* (Medford, MA: Feinstein International Center, Tufts University, Aug. 2011).

<sup>64</sup> Mazurana et al., *Sex and age matter*, p. 1.

<sup>65</sup> Human Rights Council resolution, 17/19, *Human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity*, A/HRC/RES/17/19 (adopted 17 June 2011).

Council, the UN released its first report on gay rights as human rights.<sup>66</sup> Two years later, in 2013 the UN launched 'Free & Equal', the first campaign directly working to support the rights of LGBT individuals, and to combat homophobia and transphobia.

In the wake of the 'Free & Equal' campaign, there is the opportunity for the mainstreaming of a more expansive understanding of sexual orientation and gender identity from the UN and NGOs working to implement the WPS architecture. The issues raised by the UN in this campaign, along with emerging data about targeted violence against the LGBTQ population as documented by NGOs such as OutRight Action International, speak to the concerns of LGBTQ individuals and how these concerns might intersect with the work of the WPS architecture to address SGBV. Data from complex humanitarian emergencies also offer insights into the impacts sexual orientation and gender identity have on individuals' ability to access basic needs and services in spaces similar to those in post-conflict environments where WPS programmes operate.

The Yogyakarta Principles, developed in 2006 on the basis of international human rights law as it applies to sexual orientation and gender identity, provide a framework for incorporating rights for sexual minorities. This set of 29 principles on the application of international human rights law in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity could inform consideration of how a more radical gender perspective might be incorporated in the WPS framework. The introduction to the document explains that the principles 'address a broad range of human rights standards and their application to issues of sexual orientation and gender identity [and] affirm the primary obligation of States to implement human rights'.<sup>67</sup> Among the principles are the right to seek asylum, the right to found a family and the right to security of the person. It is also important to note that the definition of gender identity used in the document is:

each person's deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond with the sex assigned at birth, including the personal sense of the body (which may involve, if freely chosen, modification of bodily appearance or function by medical, surgical or other means) and other expressions of gender, including dress, speech and mannerisms.<sup>68</sup>

These principles highlight the need to move the conversation about gender beyond one about heterosexual women to a critical queer analysis, and include the concerns of LGBTQ individuals in current gender-related work by international women's rights organizations.

Transnational work to promote gay rights as human rights is not immune from criticism. Inclusion of the lived experiences of LGBTQ individuals opens up a space for conversation about the reality of securitizing policies. Securitizing

<sup>66</sup> Human Rights Council, 'Discriminatory laws and practices and acts of violence against individuals based on their sexual orientation and gender identity'.

<sup>67</sup> Sonia Onufer Correa and Vitat Muntarbhorn, *The Yogyakarta Principles: principles on the application of international human rights law in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity*, [http://www.yogyakartaprinciples.org/principles\\_en.pdf](http://www.yogyakartaprinciples.org/principles_en.pdf), p. 7.

<sup>68</sup> Correa and Muntarbhorn, *The Yogyakarta Principles*, p. 6.

policies are those that take issues not generally considered relevant to the security of sovereign states (e.g. access to water, gender equality, climate change) and treat them in a fashion similar to traditional concerns of state security, such as the arms trade or border security. By placing these concerns within the realm of security/military operations, the state is seen to be more seriously concerned with protecting the issue at hand. Yet some feminists are critical of securitization and view it as a double-edged sword. Some human security efforts are criticized for seeking solutions to protecting human rights through securitizing, or militarizing, forces. The same criticism applies when considering securitizing the lives of queer people. How effective could homophobic and patriarchal heads of state be in operationalizing any type of securitizing policy to protect LGBTQ citizens when in fact the state may be guilty of perpetuating this violence? Queer theorist Jasbir Puar uses the term homonationalism, or 'gay racism', to explain some of the repercussions for LGBTQ individuals as sexual rights are taken up as part of the larger human rights framework, particularly the danger of seeking protection from homophobia from a state that has previously sanctioned it.<sup>69</sup> Similarly, the degree to which UN peacekeepers have been implicated in SGBV with near impunity is alarming.<sup>70</sup> Homonationalism is also used to describe the post-colonial neo-liberal rhetoric of organizations in some western countries setting out to 'save' LGBTQ individuals in developing countries. While Uganda and Russia attract much media attention for legislation banning homosexuality outright, violence against LGBTQ individuals occurs to a marked degree in western countries as well. For example, a story in the *Advocate* in late October 2015 reported 21 transgender women of colour murdered in the United States in 2015 alone.<sup>71</sup>

## **Conclusion: queering WPS**

The WPS architecture is a powerful vehicle for informing peace and security work with a gender perspective, though heteronormative and cissexist assumptions about gender can have an exclusionary impact. Furthermore, applying a queer lens to the WPS architecture does more than bring attention to LGBTQ individuals; it also highlights ways in which masculine and feminine assumptions influence operations at the Security Council, and urges an intersectional understanding of how class, race, sex and gender operate in conjunction to make individuals vulnerable to SGBV.

Queer theory and the experiences of LGBTQ individuals have important implications for other elements of the WPS agenda, too, including participation, conflict prevention and gender equity. Much work has been done to push for all-female peacekeeping units and more female officers. Similar efforts to count the

<sup>69</sup> Jasbir K. Puar, 'Homonationalism as assemblage: viral travels, affective sexualities', *Jindal Global Law Review* 4: 2, 2013, pp. 23–43.

<sup>70</sup> Joanne Mariner, 'UN peacekeepers who rape and abuse are criminals—so treat them as such', *Guardian* online, 20 Aug. 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2015/aug/20/un-peacekeepers-rape-sexual-abuse-criminals-car-ban-ki-moon>.

<sup>71</sup> Mitch Kellaway and Sunnive Brydum, 'These are the US trans women killed in 2015', *Advocate* online, 21 Oct. 2015, <http://www.advocate.com/transgender/2015/07/27/these-are-trans-women-killed-so-far-us-2015>.

number of LGBTQ individuals recruited and included in this aspect of peace and security work might be in order. In terms of policy changes to address violence against the LGBTQ population, rather than an additional resolution to protect the LGBTQ population in conflict, concerns related to sexual orientation and gender identity could be addressed more immediately by beginning with the discourse of gender. Gender mainstreaming work must also be about addressing power in the form of political gender relations and socialized normative assumptions about masculinity and femininity. Efforts to mainstream gender will remain incomplete until programmes can document their inclusion of local LGBTQ individuals.

NGOs should be wary of cissexism and heteronormative assumptions in their crucial monitoring work on the implementation of the WPS documents. One way to address this would be to invite LGBTQ organizations to the table to help develop indicators in a way that also captures homophobic and transphobic violence, in order to meet the security needs of all of those most vulnerable to SGBV. The NGO Working Group and UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict are both equipped to begin to monitor homophobic and transphobic violence, and to call on states to address the full spectrum of violence related to sexual orientation and gender identity as part of a more complete response to conflict-related SGBV.

Feminists and queer theorists alike raise questions about the securitizing impacts of the human security framing. The LGBTQ population is at the crux of this citizen security dilemma. As this article has shown, people pushed to the margins because of their sexual orientation and gender identity are vulnerable to SGBV in similar ways to women in conflict-related environments, often from multiple intersecting inequalities. The Security Council took cues from civil society to begin addressing SGBV against women, and may well do the same for addressing SGBV targeting LGBTQ individuals. A radical gender perspective in peace and security operations that uses the WPS architecture requires transphobic and homophobic violence in conflict-related environments to be addressed, and LGBTQ individuals to be brought into the conversation about achieving global peace and security.